ISSN 1059-1249

The Magic Lantern Gazette

Volume 18, Number 4 Winter 2006

Clear the Track

Wells Collectionss

The Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada

www.magiclanternsociety.org

A Winter Night's Magic Lantern

The *Aurora Borealis* has so often lent a transient luster to the cool nights of our latitude, that few need be told of the variety of shapes which it assumes. Its most common appearance is that of a broad sheet of pale, yellow light, blended at times with red, intermingled with long streaks of whitish light, darting upwards from the horizon to the zenith. But it has a multiplicity of forms, varying in the intensity and color of light, velocity of motion, and duration of appearance, from the faint, quick flashes—like heat lightning of a sultry evening—to the steady brilliant column, standing like a pillar of fire in the sky. Sometimes, like an immense **magic lantern**, it flings its fanciful forms along the whole Northern space, spire mingling with column in beautiful array—now a wavy fold of light, like the shaking of gilded tapestry, and now a broad sheet of molten radiance, laid on, as it were, with a feathery brush. Sometimes it appears directly overhead, as a glittering crown about the zenith; and once in half a century, perhaps, as if to startle the mind with its wonderful character, rivaling the rainbow in grandeur and beauty, it spans with a bright arch this nether world, winging its sublime and majestic flight across the firmament.

The Knickerbocker,
August, 1834

Winter seems like a good time for magic lanterns—long winter nights bring to mind Victorian magic lantern shows, magic lanterns under the Christmas tree, and colorful scenes of Santa bringing gifts and children enjoying the holiday season. It also brings to mind scenes of snow-covered hills and horse-drawn sleighs. This issue offers a bit of all of these things, plus a look at the history, culture, and literature of the magic lantern. It starts with a Civil War era children's Christmas story that features a magic lantern. Then there is a gallery of black and white lantern slides evoking winters of a hundred years ago. Erkki Huhtamo has provided a detailed essay review of Mervyn Heard's new book, *Phantasmagoria*, complete with some illustrations of items from his own collection. Finally, I have assembled some short summaries of academic research articles in a variety of disciplines that are related to the magic lantern, from Kircher's early illustrations to the use of magic lanterns in the treatment of the insane.

To maintain this sort of varied content, what the *Gazette* and its editor need now is more contributions. The pooled collections and knowledge of the members of this society provide a vast store of information on the history, art, culture, and literature of the magic lantern. Why not share a bit of that knowledge with our readers? All sorts of contributions are welcome—not all need be heavily annotated research papers. Articles on the back story of a particularly interesting set of slides (for example, David Evans' article on *The Tiger and the Tub* in the March 2006 issue), details about some unusual form of lantern, the history of various magic lantern manufacturers, the relationship of song slides to sheet music, the art of the magic lantern slide, the use of magic lanterns in churches and hospitals—all of these are possibilities. If you collect photographic lantern slides and have some that would make an interesting black and white gallery, like that on pages 8-9 of this issue, send in some images. If you have unusual trade cards or other ephemera that would make attractive additions to the covers, why not share them with our readers? If you are an active or retired college professor, librarian, or museum curator, and come across an academic article related to magic lanterns that would be of interest to our readers, send in a short summary. I plan to publish more book reviews in the future as well, and volunteer reviewers are needed.

For those thinking of contributing something to a future issue of the Gazette, I have provided some suggestions on p. 23 of this issue. For now, happy holidays!

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Wells collection

Contraband Christmas

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Three negroes, owned by Colonel Mallory, a lawyer of Hampton and a Rebel officer, taking advantage of the terror prevailing among the white inhabitants, escaped from their master, skulked during the afternoon, and in the night came to our pickets. The next morning, May 24 [1861], they were brought to General Butler, and there, for the first time, stood the Major-General and the fugitive slave face to face…. The three negroes, being held contraband of war, were at once set to work to aid the masons in constructing a new bakehouse within the fort. Thenceforward the term "contraband" bore a new signification, with which it will pass into history, designating the negroes who had been held as slaves, now adopted under the protection of the Government… It was applied familiarly to the negroes, who stared somewhat, inquiring, "What d' ye call us that for?"

Edward L. Pierce, "The contrabands at Fortress Monroe," *Atlantic Monthly*, November 1861, p. 627

Among the items I inherited from my parents' large collection of books related to magic lanterns is a small green book written for children entitled *Contraband Christmas*[1]. I had not looked at the book for years, but it being near the Christmas season, I decided to see how it related to magic lanterns. The book is a fairly minor piece of magic lantern literature, but it sheds some interesting light on the social history of the period and shows that magic lanterns would have been very familiar to readers in the middle of the 19th Century.

First published during the Civil War in 1863, the book was reprinted in various editions for many years after that. It tells the story of a former slave, or contraband, who is taken from a South Carolina plantation to a farm in Rhode Island by Capt. Abijah Greene of a Rhode Island army regiment. He calls himself Chrismus, in a northern writer's idea of southern black dialect, because, having been born on Christmas Day, he was named Christmas Day King by his owner, "Massa King." In keeping with a romanticized view of southern slavery that was common even among strongly anti-slavery northern writers, the former master of Chrismus is described as a kindly patriarch, in contrast to some of his neighbors.[2]

> His had been a mild and merry kind of bondage; the "institution" had been truly patriarchal and paternal, just and kind—as much so as even it can be—on Massa King's estate; for there have been, and doubtless are, not a few exceptions to the generally harsh and cruel and degrading rule of slavery (p. 32).

Chrismus himself is described in the typical stereotypes of southern blacks at that time—kindly, pious, and gentle, but ignorant and unsophisticated. Although 20 years old, he is depicted essentially as a child, and his interactions in the family are mostly with the children, especially the young son, David Greene.

Three contrabands in the camp of a Rhode Island regiment in Washington, D. C., 1863. From a stereo card by Anthony, New York.

Library of Congress, Division of Prints and Photographs, reproduction number LC-USZ62-118355

The magic lantern enters the story when the children, but not Chrismus, attend an evening Sunday school service. The service closes with some joyous hymn singing, at which point the pastor tells the children, "You have behaved *very* well, so far, this evening. Next Sunday, the *Lantern*." The children are excited, but wonder if a magic lantern is appropriate for use in church:

> "The Lantern"—a Magic Lantern?
>
> Yes; a fine one: calcium light, oxygen gas, and all that. Any objections?
>
> Why, no, perhaps not; but a magic lantern for a Sunday-school, and exhibited on Sunday evening?
>
> Certainly. All the preparations are made on Saturday: on Sunday evening, all we have to do is to light the lantern and place the "slides" before it. And our pictures are all Bible-pictures: "Christ blessing little children," a photograph on glass of West's beautiful painting, finely colored, magnified to a diameter of eight or ten feet; "the Beautiful Gate of the Temple," from Raphael; "Rebekah at the Well," after some other famous artist. We have a score or two of pictures like these, and at our exhibitions the Rector explains them and talks about them, one by one; or else the Maggies and Marys, or Josephs and Johns, recite appropriate poetry or prose, or the passage of Scripture illustrated, for each picture.

Lantern slide of *Rebekah at the Well*. Artist and manufacturer unknown. Wells collection.

> But your room must be dark while the pictures are shown.
>
> Yes.
>
> And do your children *behave well* after the lights are put out?
>
> *Yes*, sir! (pp. 42-43)

Later, David tries to explain the workings of the magic lantern to Chrismus, but becomes frustrated by his child-like ignorance.

> He was trying to explain the mysteries of the Magic Lantern to Chrismus; but either he did not explain it very well, which is probable, since he knew but little about the matter, or Chrismus did not understand very well, which is not to be wondered at; for they made a muddle of it together.
>
> "Magic Lantum! What's dat?"
>
> "Why, you know what a lantern is, Chrismus?"
>
> "Sartumly! Dere's one hangin' up bein' de do' now."
>
> "Well, this a'n't like that."—(A pause) "An' dat a'n't like dis. So fur am so am so good. Go on, Mass' Dave."
>
> "You keep still now, if you want to hear about it. You see they make a quantity of gas"—
>
> "What's dat? Oh! I'se hear do sogers say to one umnudder, 'O gas!' when one tell a big"—
>
> "Keep still, will you? Or else *I'll* stop. *You* don't know what *gas* is. Gas is a— a kind of a—well; it's a substance"—
>
> "'Substums'; go on."
>
> "And they put it in a bag; and if it should catch a-fire, it would all blow up!"
>
> "An', den what dey do?"
>
> "Why, they light the lantern with this gas"—

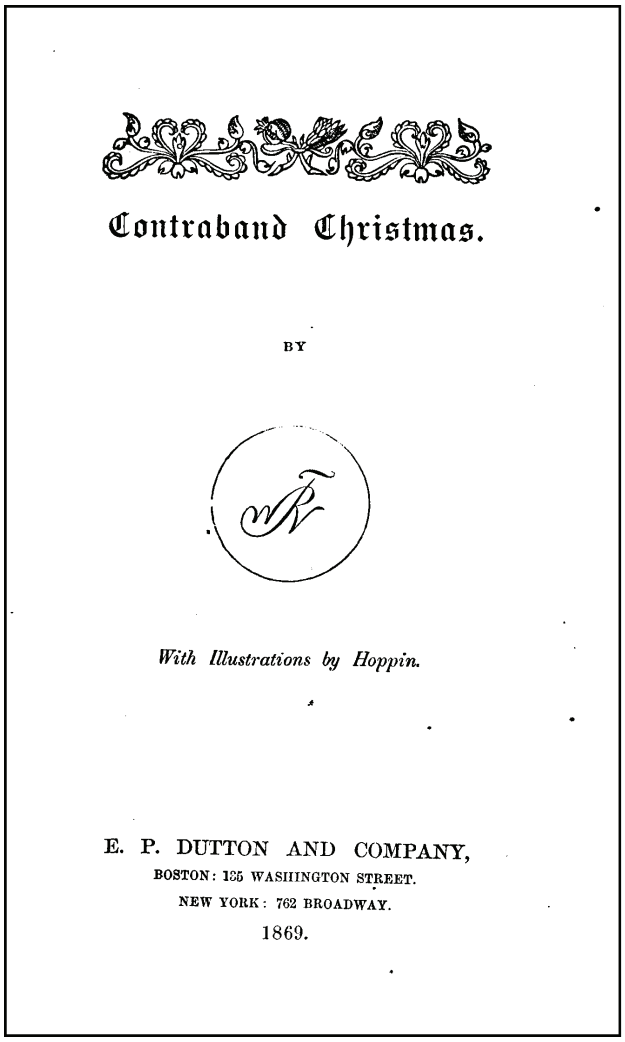
> "Den dey all blow up! Ki! Dis chile drudder not go to *dat* exumbishum!"
>
> "No, it don't blow up, neither! They screw it on behind the lantern and touch it off inside."
>
> "Oh, dat's it, den? 'Screw it on' an' 'touch it off,'—an' den?"
>
> "Then they have a very strong light; and they put pictures in front of it, and they show through—they have a large cloth in front"—
>
> "'Cloff'?"
>
> "Yes; and the pictures show on the cloth."
>
> "An' de picture show on de cloff;' I see. But what become ob de *substums*?"
>
> "Fudge! What's the use of trying to explain anything to *you*!" (pp. 47-49)

Chrismus never does get to see the magic lantern, but the next Monday, the whole family gathers around the fire, and David describes the previous evening's Sunday school activities, including music and the magic lantern show.

> "Sometimes the organ would get agoing louder and louder, and the voices would follow it up, *grand*! It almost made me stand on my toes. Ma, you're so fond of music, you *would* like to hear such music as that."
>
> "Chrismus boun' to go next Sunday, *sure*!"
>
> "In the evening, after tea, we went to the lantern exhibition; and all I can tell you about that is, that you never *saw* such beautiful pictures! First, though, they sung, all hands—little bits of children, old folks and all. Then they turned off the gas and the room was dark, all but a great round circle of white, at the end of the room; and then—whack! And that was gone, and then—whack! Again; and there was a splendid picture all in colors, and the figures as large as life! Pictures of people and pictures of places: and the minister explained them all. I can't remember them, there were so many; but one, ma, was 'Christ blessing little children': that was the name the minister gave it. There was a picture of a little girl in it, kneeling down, as much like our Daisy in her nightgown, as if it had been made for her. I do wish you could have seen it!" (pp. 57-58)

The story continues with a lot of discussion of the virtues of regular church attendance and family preparations for Christmas. The big surprise comes when Chrismus is reunited with Flora, a former slave from the same plantation sent north by the kindly Massa King and even endowed with some money, presumably because the days of slavery were clearly numbered. Chrismus and Flora are married on New Year's Day. Later, looking back to when they were reunited, Chrismus says, "Bress de Lord! Dat was de merries' Chris'mus *we* eber had! Wasn't it, Flo'?"

FLORA AND CHRISTMAS Page 99.



Contraband Christmas.

BY

With Illustrations by Hoppin.

E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY,
BOSTON: 135 WASHINGTON STREET.
NEW YORK: 762 BROADWAY.
1869.

A little research in library catalogs and on the internet revealed that *Contraband Christmas* was written by the Rev. N. W. Taylor Root, an Episcopal minister from Rhode Island. Born in 1829, he was ordained in Christ Church, Lonsdale, Rhode Island in 1861.[3] In 1862, President Lincoln issued an urgent call for troops to defend Washington against a rebel attack, and Rhode Island responded by combining several national guard units and volunteers into the 9th Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteers, with Rev. Root as its Chaplain and Postmaster. The regiment never saw combat and after three months of aimless marching between various posts and garrison duty around Washington, the unit was disbanded and the men returned to Rhode Island.[4] In 1864, the Rev. Root became Rector of St. James Church in Newton, Long Island, where he stayed for three years.[5] He then moved to Maine, where he became Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Portland until 1872, when he died of smallpox at age 43.[6] Before becoming a minister, Root had been a teacher. In addition to *Contraband Christmas*, he also wrote *School Amusements, or How to Make the School Interesting* (1857), which received a lot of attention for its discussion of physical education and military exercises and drills.[7] There is no suggestion in this book that the magic lantern would enhance education in schools.

As Rector of the Episcopal Church of Newton, Rev. Root was described as "a man of fine pulpit ability, whose ministrations attracted so large a congregation that an immediate enlargement of the church was proposed." [8] The church was not enlarged, but one wonders whether the Rev. Root made use of the magic lantern to increase attendance at his services. We can only speculate, but it seems likely that he had personal experience with the use of the magic lantern. Certainly his reference to a lantern with limelight illumination suggests familiarity with a fairly sophisticated and expensive type of lantern that might have been used in a church.

Throughout the 19th Century, ministers related stories of magic lantern services drawing large crowds, and magic lanterns probably were making regular appearances at evening services by the 1860s. As early as 1840, the *Saturday Evening Post* announced an address by the Rev. J. Libby at the Youth's Washington Temperance Society in the lecture room of the Central Church, adding that "a series of paintings illustrative of the effects of intemperance will be exhibited through the Magic Lantern."[9] The *Christian Inquirer* of 1848 reported that "The Rev. Mr. Hincks has kindly consented to exhibit a very interesting series of Dissolving Views, which he has brought from London, for the amusement and instruction of the pupils in the Sunday Schools of the church of the Messiah and the church of the Divine Unity… Mr. Hincks' series of pictures, magnified and dissolved by two large and powerful magic lanterns, lighted by oxy-hydrogen gas, furnish a complete 'Tour in the Old World,' exhibiting the most remarkable edifices, ruins, and scenery."[10] In 1859, the *New York Evangelist* advocated the use of magic lanterns in churches: "A pastor, or a Sabbath School superintendent, might, by a little contrivance, greatly entertain and probably benefit the children, over whose welfare they should affectionately watch, by procuring a magic lantern and a few slides depicting scriptural scenes and incidents, attending the exhibition of them with simple lectures… The interest awakened by such lectures, affords a high vantage-ground for filling up a Sabbath School, or Mission schools."[11] Perhaps Rev. Root followed this advice.

Notes and References

1. Nathaniel William Taylor Root, *Contraband Christmas* (E. P. Dutton and Company, Boston, 1863) (my edition is 1869).

2. For a general discussion of this romanticized view of

southern slavery in writings of the period, see George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (Harper & Row, New York, 1971). The use of the term "contraband" in the popular literature of the period is discussed in Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861-1865* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2001).

3. *The Independent*, January 17, 1861, p. 3.

4. Edwin Winchester Stone, *Rhode Island in the Rebellion* (G. H. Whitney, Providence, 1864); see also the website for Department of Rhode Island Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Commodore Joel Abbot, Camp. No. 21, 9th Regiment, Rhode Island Infantry, Field and Staff (http://suvcwricamp21.tripod.com/Infantry/9infmain.htm).

5. *New York Observer and Chronicle*, December 8, 1864, p. 386; see also a discussion of the history of the Episcopal Church of Newton in: *History of Queens County, New York* (W. W. Munsell & Co., 1882).

6. Obituary for Rev. N. W. Taylor Root, *New York Evangelist*, January 9, 1873, p. 5. He is described in the obituary as "a graduate of Yale College, chaplain of a Rhode Island regiment during the war, and an accomplished artist and writer as well as a faithful minister." A photograph of Rev. Root in 1870 is available on the Maine Memory website of the Maine Historical Society (http://www.mainememory.net/bin/Detail?ln=16131). A photograph of his wife also appears on this website.

7. N. W. Taylor Root, *School Amusements, or How to Make the School Interesting* (A. S. Barnes and Company, New York, 1857). A digital facsimile of this book can be accessed online.

8. *History of Queens County, New York* (W. W. Munsell & Co., 1882).

9. *Saturday Evening Post*, March 21, 1840, p. 3.

10. *Christian Inquirer*, April 1, 1848, p. 98.

11. *New York Evangelist*, January 20, 1859, p. 3.

A Visit to an English "Ragged School" in 1862

For evidence of the widespread use of the magic lantern for religious instruction in the 1860s, we can turn to *The New York Evangelist* for July 24, 1862, which described a magic lantern show in an English "Ragged School," a type of mission school for poor children. The description of the exhibition of religious slides is remarkably similar to the fictional account of the church lantern show given by Rev. Root in *Contraband Christmas*:

"As evening approached, the children were again called together and generously fed with substantial food, and some luxuries, as presents, divided among them. They were then addressed by Mr. Bevan, who thanked them for their good conduct, told them how much pleasure their visit had given him, and earnestly exhorted them, in a few words of Christian fellowship, to grow up good men and women, fearing God and living in obedience to his commandments. He then said they would be shown a series of pictures illustrating the life of the 'Prodigal Son,' who after wasting his substance among bad people, was compelled to feed the swine. He soon repented and returned to his father's house, where he was received with great joy.

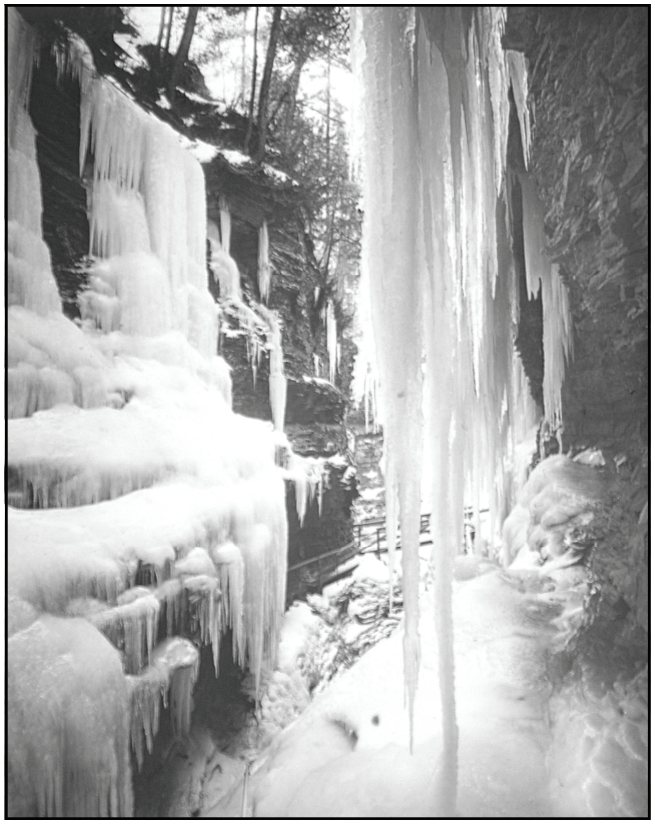
The children, with their teachers and the guests, were then taken to a large temporary structure, provided with seats, and there, for an hour, entertained with scenes in the life of the 'Prodigal,' shown through a magic lantern. A competent person from London had charge of the exhibition, who explained the incidents and scenes represented, coupled with judicious remarks. The whole entertainment was attractive in the highest degree, and the moral influence must have been most happy, as all, especially the children, were greatly delighted."

Lantern slide of the Prodigal Son feeding swine.
Wells collection

Wednesday's snowstorm was just what the amateur photographers had been hoping for. The snowfalls previous to it had not been of a nature to make picturesque scenes. They had been composed of dry, frosty snow, which had not settled on the treetops or piled up on the fences. But the last storm had plastered every object out of doors. Being damp, the snowflakes remained wherever they fell. The woods put on a beautiful frock of fleecy whiteness, while great puffs of snow were lifted up above the bushes… The parks were, of course, the most popular places, as the scenes were so varied and the formation of the "snow caps" so peculiar. But right in the main avenues and out of back windows good bits of snow views could be gained. Some of the choice bits of work accomplished by the young photographers will be seen soon at the lantern-slide exhibitions.

The New York Times, March 24, 1890, p. 8

Lantern slide of winter snow, St. John's, Newfoundland
Photo by S. H. Parsons



Ice in Watkin's Glen, New York 1915 ►

Tourists exploring the interior of a glacier in Switzerland

Lantern slide of winter snowfall, Niagara Falls, New York

All images from the Wells Collection

At an exhibition of "Dissolving Views," the audience by one consent uttered "Beautiful! Beautiful!" when a cottage scene was represented as changed from the surroundings of summer to those of winter. The first picture was very beautiful, the vine-wreathed cottage, the rustic bridge, the stream with its dipping and shaking ducks, the field and the orchard, the hills and the church spire in the distance; but when the change came, there was as much beauty, though of a soberer cast, more solemn and more grand…. Winter has its scenery—distinct, peculiar, magnificent, and sublime. With what a delight does the child behold the first snow-storm, and how magically to his sight do the trees and dwellings change. What clothing do they put on! How it purifies the aspect of everything, so saint-like and so sweet.

Henry Bacon, "Winter Scenery," *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, August 20, 1853, p. 119

Lantern slide of a Colorado snowfall

Lantern slide of Mr. Gowell in a sleigh with Bruno, February 1903

Lantern slide of a winter scene from William Brady's New York stage production of *Way Down East* (1898). Photo by Joseph Byron

Lantern slide of a winter scene from the New York stage production of Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection* (1903). Photo by Joseph Byron

All images from the Wells Collection

Ghost Notes: Reading Mervyn Heard's *Phantasmagoria. The Secret Life of the Magic Lantern*

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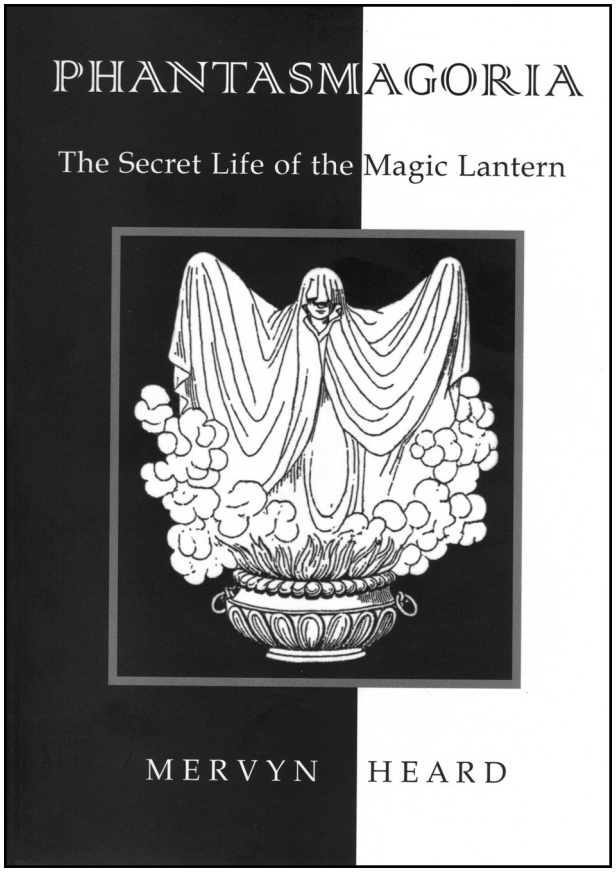
Mervyn Heard. 2006. *Phantasmagoria: The Secret Life of the Magic Lantern.* The Projection Box, 12 High St., Hastings, East Sussex, UK (www.stephenherbert.co.uk). $55.00 (paper).

At the British Magic Lantern Society's Convention in 2002, mysterious things were happening behind a closed door. Small groups of participants were allowed to enter a small chamber, to be initiated into the mysteries of ghost-raising. After one's eyes had adjusted themselves to the darkness, spirits could be seen emerging and manifesting themselves on a smoke screen. It was all mirth and mystery (and fun).

The Magus performing these rites was 'professor' Mervyn Heard, the well-known magic lantern showman and current president of the Magic Lantern Society of the UK. The demonstration was also an appropriate way of celebrating Heard's academic achievement: after years of work with human-made ghosts, Heard had defended his Ph.D. dissertation on the phantasmagoria at the University of Exeter's Drama Department (2001). Heard had already published samples of his research (most notably, a series of articles in the *New Magic Lantern Journal* in the 1990s), but the 'definitive' statement was missing.[1] No longer: The Projection Box has finally released Heard's *Phantasmagoria. The Secret Life of the Magic Lantern*, and a substantial volume it is: more than 300 tightly printed pages, luckily with numerous illustrations. There is even a gorgeous color section with many rare phantasmagoria slides, most of them reproduced for the first time!

How closely the book corresponds with Heard's Ph.D. dissertation I cannot tell. The main arguments are familiar from his articles, but new bits of information have been added since they were published; that process, of course, is endless.[2] As it stands, Heard's book will no doubt become the standard reference for anybody looking for the 'true' meaning and history of phantasmagoria. It is the most extensive and accessible exploration of the topic so far, and will correct popular misconceptions and raise interest in early visual media. Still, it is not The ultimate history of phantasmagoria that would make all future histories superfluous. Plenty of work remains, as I will demonstrate in this essay. My article will be a "reading exercise" – I will be visiting the realm of phantasmagoria with Heard's book in hand, comparing it with other sources, pointing out discoveries and problems, and making suggestions for further research.[3]



Heard is not the first scholar drawn to phantasmagoria. Others, most notably Hermann Hecht, Francoise Levie and Laurent Mannoni, have already laid the groundwork.[4] Heard has synthesized and broadened their arguments, filled in details, and added discoveries of his own. For the uninitiated, his book may seem like a revelation, a work covering almost totally new ground. There must be many of those who recognize the word, but have no idea about its origins. This may partly be the result of the very omnipresence of 'things phantasmagoric' in contemporary culture (as a Google will tell you in a fraction of a second). For us 'phantasmagoriacs' the book contains less that is absolutely new. To mention the most obvious example, in spite of the widely accepted popular narrative, repeated even by academics, linking phantasmagoria to the name of Étienne-Gaspard Robertson, it has long been known by specialists that he is not its true inventor.[5]

Phantasmagoria was based on earlier practices linking ghost-raising and showmanship, as Heard amply demonstrates in the first chapters of his book. There was also plenty of "how to" - literature available already in the 18th century, a fact that was not ignored by the 'phantasmagores'. A key figure was Paul Philidor, who was active in continental Europe in the 1780s-90s.[6] Through the development of his show, he formed a bridge from earlier "occult" ghost shows to later ones that at least pretended to reveal and demonstrate superstitions in a rationalistic spirit. In 1792-93 Philidor exhibited his "Phantasmagori*e*" in Paris, using the word (as far as we know) for the first time. After a few months the show ended abruptly, and Philidor disappeared. What happened? Was he arrested and perhaps executed? Did he manage to flee Robespierre's regime of terror? What became of him? Who was he? Could he have been the same person as a certain 'Philadelphia', or 'Paul de Philipsthal', who introduced "Phantasmagori*a*" (with an *a* in the end) to England in 1801 at the Lyceum Theatre, London? Earlier scholars like Hecht, Levie and Mannoni have been asking such questions, without being able to give definite answers.

Philidor is Philipsthal, but is he Really?

Heard states - without hesitation - that Philidor *is* Philipsthal (while 'Philadelphia' is obviously another person) and repeats it as an established fact.[7] What evidence does he provide to support his claim? First of all, since his articles were published, Heard has managed to trace Philidor's movements further. We now hear about 'De Heer Phylidor's' or 'Phyllidors' exploits in Holland and Russia already in 1786-87. Further, the *Groninger Courant* (17 March 1786) claims that the 'professor of physics' Philidor had come from France, where he had been "favoured by the *menu plaisir* of the King of France."[8] Obviously he was not the famous musician and chess player Francois-André Danican, a.k.a. Philidor (1726-95), although he seems to have claimed being his "distant cousin".[9] Whether our Philidor had come to France from somewhere else, or could have been French himself (or German, Flemish or British as has also been assumed), still needs to be established.[10]

Heard also sheds light on Philidor's mysterious disappearance from Paris in 1783 by locating him in Solothurn, Switzerland later that year, where his permission to perform seems to have been revoked by the authorities after just one performance.[11] We meet him here and there in Germany and Holland between 1794-1800 (interestingly, his notices don't refer to Phantasmagorie).[12] Crossing the British Channel in 1801 with his resurrected and slightly re-named Phantasmagoria would sound like the logical next step. Although he may not have been able to step on French soil in these years, he could have boarded the ship in Holland (passenger lists might provide a clue). Changing his showman alias would have been nothing extraordinary; hadn't he already changed the name of his show from "Phantasmorasi" to "Phantasmagorie"?[13]

When it comes to Philidor's disappearance from Paris, Heard brings up a source that no phantasmagoria-scholar seems to have discussed, although it was already pointed out by John Barnes in 1970: the *Memoirs and Reminiscences from France* (1838) of the legendary wax museum owner Marie Tussaud.[14] As part of her remembrance of Robespierre (who is said to have been a frequent quest at Tussaud's mentor's, Philippe Curtius's, house in Paris, and seated at dinner table next to Marie, who later modeled his severed head), Tussaud tells an undated anecdote about "A Monsieur Phillipstal" [sic] to prove that even the "incorruptible" Robespierre could be bribed. The passage has key significance for Heard's argument, because it implies that Philipsthal may indeed have been Philidor. For some unexplained reason, Heard has not used the original *Memoirs*, but quotes an inexact retelling from Anita Leslie's and Pauline Chapman's biography of Tussaud (1978).[15] For future scholars, here is the original passage:

"One instance of his not *rejecting* gold came within the knowledge of Madame Tussaud. / A Monsieur Phillipstal was exhibiting his phantasmagoria, in a large room, filled with people, some time after the execution of Louis the Sixteenth, and one of the men employed, by mistake, advanced the figure of the unfortunate monarch, and drawing it up, in order to make room for another, it was judged by the audience as a sort of allegory, implying, that the king would rise to heaven; whereupon the greatest disapprobation was manifested, and M. Phillipstal was immediately arrested by the gens d'armes, and conveyed to prison. His wife, after having tried other means to obtain her husband's release, came in the middle of the night to M. Curtius, to solicit his influence, which he promised to exert, the next morning, in behalf of the unfortunate prisoner. As Phillipstal was, at that time, a rich man, keeping a carriage, and living in a style consistent with his fortune, his wife signified her readiness to sacrifice a sum of money to obtain her husband's emancipation, and gave M. Curtius three hundred Louis for him to present to Robespierre; which request was complied with. On M. Curtius leaving the room, after having obtained an order for setting Phillipstal at liberty, he left on the table three hundred Louis, without saying a word to Robespierre about them; and as they were never sent back, there can be no doubt that the gift was accepted."[16]

Although Leslie's and Chapman's version more or less follows this passage, a few details deserve attention. In Tussaud's version, the lanternist "advanced the figure of the unfortunate monarch, and drawing it up, in order to make room for another, it was judged by the audience as a sort of allegory, implying, that the king would rise to heaven." This seems to imply that the figure may have been advancing in true phantasmagoria manner; however, if a vertical slide was used, "drawing it up" would have produced an 'allegory' of the king *sinking into Hell* – as every lanternist knows, slides are inserted in the magic lantern upside

down! This persuasive story, eagerly picked up by Tussaud's biographers and Heard alike, may be just a legend. It is suspicious that Robertson is also linked with an episode about showing a slide of Louis XVI. Tussaud might have read Robertson's *Mémoirs*, published in 1831-33 and mixed things up.[17] The always skeptical John Barnes thinks along these lines.[18] The other interesting remark is that 'Phillipstal' "was, at that time, a rich man, keeping a carriage, and living in a style consistent with his fortune." This could be a clue about his identity – was he 'just' a touring showman who had only recently arrived in Paris, or, rather, somebody with an established position in the (pre-revolutionary? French?) society? Tussaud also implies that 'Phillipstal' would later have lost his wealth, like many wealthy Frenchmen at the time. Following the lead from the *Groninger Courant*, future searches should perhaps be directed to the France of the 1780s.[19]

It has been known that Marie Tussaud entered into a business relationship with Paul de Philipsthal, who in 1802 persuaded her to bring some of her wax figures from France to be displayed in England; the move proved permanent for Tussaud. Leslie and Chapman speak about Philipsthal as Tussaud's "old friend."[20] However, the *Memoirs* contain nothing that would warrant such an interpretation, not even proving that Tussaud and Philipsthal had ever met in Paris. Alliances between show people were common, however. When describing her departure for England in the final pages of the *Memoirs*, Tussaud does not say a word about 'Monsieur Phillipstal,' which would of course be understandable remembering the catastrophic nature of their subsequent partnership, documented in Tussaud's correspondence between 1803-04.[21] How the partnership first started seems to be based on Leslie's and Chapman's imagination; they don't refer to concrete sources in their description and don't even use footnotes. In Tussaud's most recent biography by Kate Berridge (2006), the Philidor-Phillipsthal identification, his saving by Curtius and the origins of the Tussaud-Philipsthal partnership have become established facts, mainly thanks to the new authority of Heard's articles![22]

Marie Tussaud's and Philipsthal's short but stormy business relationship in England between 1802-04 makes fascinating reading and would provide a good topic for a film. Besides, we know that it really took place. But has it finally been proven that Philidor *is* Philipsthal? This seems likely, but from a scholarly perspective, one should still be skeptical. It might be pointed out that Madame Tussaud's *Memoirs* were put together when she was nearing eighty, more than thirty years after she had bought herself free from the exploitative contract with Philipsthal. Her book is a contribution to the political history of revolutionary France, rather than an account of Tussaud's own life in show business, which would have been much more interesting. Within the general line of her narrative, the anecdote about 'Monsieur Phillipstal' is a (fortunate) anomaly. Furthermore, the *Memoirs* were 'edited' (read: written) by Francis Hervé, based on his communications with Tussaud. In his preface, Hervé lauds the clarity of Tussaud's memory when it comes to events and personalities, but warns about the difficulties of situating them in precise moments in time.

Fortunately, Heard has found an extraordinary source that very likely proves his point: a 31-page program booklet for a competing show, Schirmer's & Scholl's Ergascopia, presented at the Lyceum in London in 1805.[23] This booklet contains a fairly detailed and well-informed history of phantasmagoria up to that point. Although it is meant to prove the superiority of Schirmer's & Scholl's offerings compared with those of the others, it also provides precious pieces of information. As Heard already pointed out in one of his articles (but *not* in the book!), the booklet mentions "Mr. Philidore, alias Philipsthal" – no less than three times![24] When talking about his shows in Paris "during the French revolution," the showman is mentioned as Philipsthal, echoing Tussaud's much later story. However, it would be interesting to know who wrote (or translated?) the booklet in fluent English. It could not have been Schirmer & Scholl themselves, nor another German showman also active at the Lyceum, Frederick Winsor. According to Heard, Winsor sponsored his fellow countrymen's show, and spoke very little English himself (just like Philipsthal!).[25] This is interesting, because a close-reading reveals an intriguing discrepancy: although Schirmer & Scholl promise to reveal all the secrets of the other phantasmagores, the booklet does not even get their most basic technique right. The phantoms are said to "grow increasing in magnitude, in proportion as the Lantern is advanced towards the curtain..." – of course, *the opposite* is true![26]

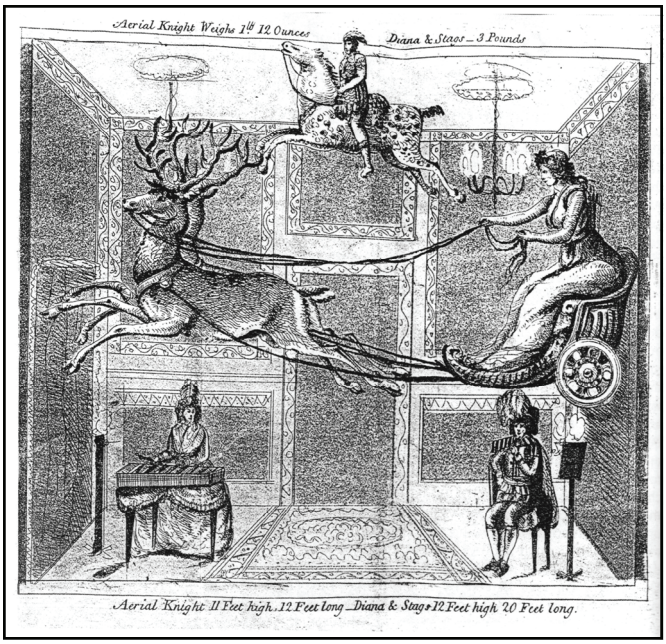
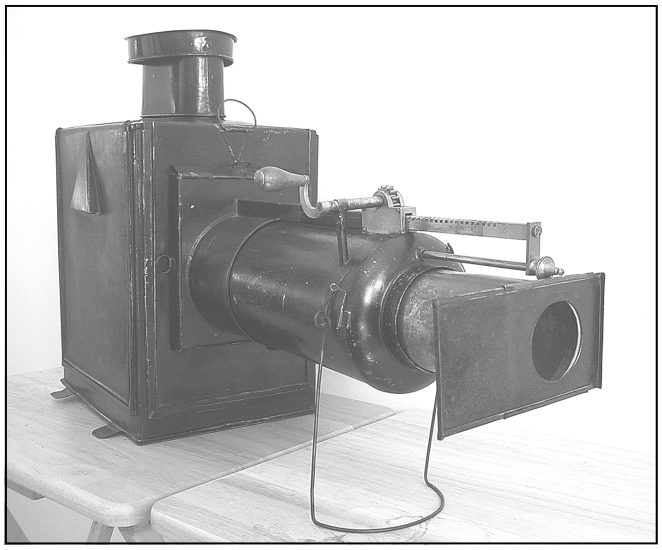

Aerial Knight Weighs 1lb 12 Ounces
Diana & Stags – 3 Pounds
Aerial Knight 11 Feet high 12 Feet long Diana & Stags 12 Feet high 20 Feet long.

Illustration showing gigantic floating figures from the pamphlet on *Ergascopia* (1805) by Shirmer & Scholl. From Heard, *Phantasmagoria*, p. 182.

Phantoms Dissolving into Landscapes

Philipsthal is Heard's main focus (his 'hero'). Compared with him, he shows little enthusiasm for the more famous Robertson, about whose career he has nothing new to say. The history, techniques and repertory of Robertson's Fantasmagorie are explained in detail, mostly because they simply cannot be omitted.[27] No links between Robertson's activities and the British developments are pointed out – is it possible that there weren't any? Robertson-style Fantasmagorie was influential in France and elsewhere long after Phantasmagoria shows had disappeared in Britain, which is proven by the fact that large Fantascopes were produced by French instrument makers like Lerebours and Molteni at least until the 1850s, and many phantasmagoria slides have been preserved, the majority of them of French origin.[28] However, survival can take unexpected forms through transfer of motives from one medium to another. I would like to suggest a British link that has not, to my knowledge, been pointed out: the use of the words "Phantasmascope" and "Fantascope" for the early sets of phenakistiscope discs published by Ackermann in London in 1833.[29] This may not have been a coincidence, which is proven by the well-known disc belonging to the very first set, showing a horrible monster attacking the viewer from the deep – a hand-held version of classic phantasmagoria! The inventor, Joseph Plateau, and his artist friend J.B. Madou had planned other 'phantasmagoric' discs as well, one of them showing a ghost-like figure (a monk?) moving in a Gothic corridor (a monastery?), holding a torch.[30] In the cover of the Belgian edition of the first Fantascope set, Plateau himself is pictured as a 'devil', holding a lantern, as another devil spins the phenakistiscope.[31]



Fantascope. Magic lantern for Phantasmagoria projections. France, c.1820-30. Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles. Photo by Erkki Huhtamo.

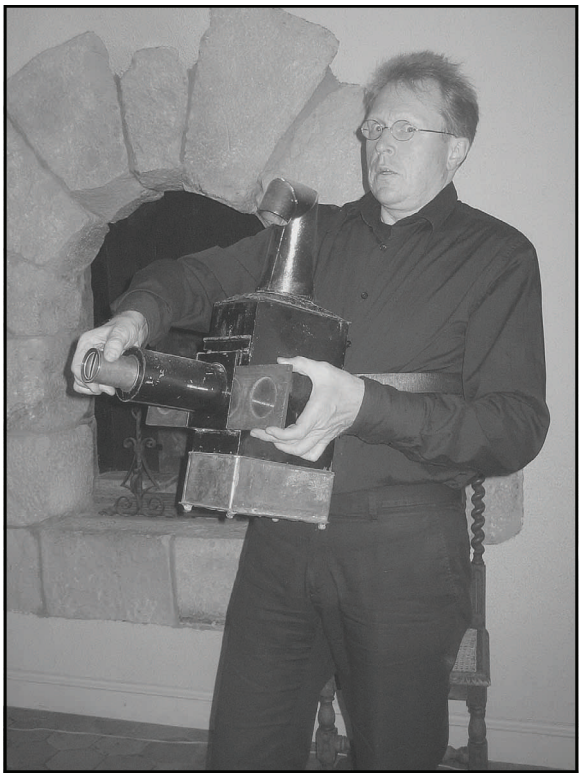
In an appendix, Heard has given information about phantasmagoria in various other countries. The material deserves to be expanded and integrated into a general history by some future scholar. A good demonstration of the extent of this tradition is Francoise Levie's richly illustrated catalogue of the Fantasmagorie lantern and slide collection of the Conservatoire des Arts et Mètiers (Paris), which Heard does not mention.[32] The activities of Philipsthal and his competitors in England during the first three decades of the 19th century receive by far the closest scrutiny. This is the best researched section of the book and seems to have been the heart of the dissertation. Heard contributes numerous previously unknown details. The descriptions of the offerings by showmen like Jack Bologna, M. St.Clair and Schirmer & Scholl, as well as of their appearances and complicated relationships, may feel tiring for some readers, but I find them essential. Through this rich cavalcade of attractions, we find out that in Britain at least phantasmagoria never had an independent identity as a show. It was always presented together with other things, such as demonstrations of automata, scientific experiments, and even huge floating 'aerostatic figures', like those displayed by Schirmer and Scholl. Phantasmagoria was just one "number" among others, and could easily be replaced by other attractions when the audience's interest faded. This is exactly what Philipsthal did when he joined forces with the automata showman Maillardet – financial gain was more important than being associated with a certain type of show, particularly when its popularity started declining.

While such variety also characterized Robertson's Fantasmagorie, the situation was different. Fantasmagorie was a permanent attraction, anachronistically speaking, a kind of mix between a science center and an amusement arcade. The optical, mechanical, galvanic and other "experiences" that were available in the first rooms were really "pre-shows", meant to serve 'audience circulation' and to create expectations by postponing the major event, a well-known tactic in the show-business. The culmination and main reason for the visit was the session of the Fantasmagorie itself, as was clearly indicated by Robertson's program leaflet.[33] The Fantasmagorie session was something much more elaborate, structured, and ambitious than Philipsthal's modest and often sloppy "roadshow". Robertson may not have been its original inventor, but he developed Fantasmagorie into something special and memorable, which may partly explain its long-lasting influence. However, as Jann Matlock has shown in her perceptive study about the "Invisible Woman" attraction and its reception, even Robertson needed to renew his offerings from time to time, to stimulate the audience's interest.[34]

Considering the reduced form in which it was presented on the British Isles, it is not surprising that Phantasmagoria soon found its way to theaters.[35] One of Heard's findings is a broadside from the Taunton Theatre (1803), in which "Phantasmagoria; Or, the SCIENCE of SPECTROLOGY" shares the bill with a comedy named "The Birth Day" and a farce called "The Lyar"; in between the plays, a "favourite song" was presented by a Mr. Cooper – the contrast is striking! [36] Phantasmagoria as the opening act may have to do with its novelty value, but certainly also with the difficulties of managing the lighting of the auditorium in the era before gas and electric light. Phantasmagoria had to be shown in darkness, which would have made it impossible to present it between the other acts; showing it in the end would have been difficult as well, because turning on the lights would have taken time and delayed the audience's exit from the theatre. Although phantasmagoria's role as a theatrical attraction was short-lived, it anticipated the more long-lasting presence of moving panoramas and dioramas as semi-independent attractions on the theatre stage since the early 1820s.

"Phantasmagoria" may have soon been dropped from the bill, but its invisible techniques lived on behind the scenes of the theater. In an article in *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, meant as a "footnote" to Heard's study of Philipsthal, David Robinson paid attention to Edward Fitzball's "serio-comic" play *The Flying Dutchman! or, The Phantom Ship* (Adelphi, 1827), for which the lantern innovator Henry Langdon Childe created a moving ghost ship by means of a rear-projected phantasmagoria-type slide.[37] This led to a short but intense ghost ship mania in London theaters. The ship effect may even have been used as part of Messrs Marshalls' peristrephic (or moving) panorama about the sea battle of Navarino, shown in Dublin the following year.[38] Rear-projected lantern slides were also used in many later projections, including the touring operetta shows staged by groups like Poole & Poole and Strange & Wilson in the 1860s and 1870s.[39] Typically, such shows presented a few scenes from Goethe's *Faust* accompanied by Gounod's music, a suitable topic for phantasmagoric effects, as Goethe himself had discovered already much earlier. Hecht has published a pencil sketch by Goethe's own hand (dated 1810-12), demonstrating his idea for visualizing the apparition of the 'Earth-Spirit' by making it approach the audience in the classic phantasmagoria manner.[40]

It seems likely that Childe used a mobile lantern carried by the lanternist – perhaps Philip Carpenter's (1776-1833) small Improved Phantasmagoria Lantern meant to be attached to the waist by a strap threaded through two metal slips on the backside of the lantern.[41] The timing would have been right: Carpenter had moved his business from Birmingham to London (24, Regent Street) in 1826.[42] His lantern was described and illustrated in the booklet *Elements of Zoology* (1823).[43] It was phantasmagoria made easy: the projectionist no longer needed heavy and bulky wheel or rail-mounted Fantascopes to conjure up approaching or receding figures.



Erkki Huhtamo demonstrating Philip Carpenter's belt-mounted "Improved Phantasmagoria Lantern", England, 1820s. Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles. The chimney has been added from another early Phantasmagoria lantern by modern Photoshop magic (it is missing from the rare Carpenter lantern, the only one known to have survived).

He could just walk back and forth behind the screen. Because the lantern was strapped to his body, his hands were free to adjust the focus, to open and close a vertical shutter plate (called "slide" by Carpenter) and to manipulate the lantern "sliders." Carpenter gives exact instructions for all this in his booklet. While the lantern could be used in the traditional manner to make the figures approach or retreat, it could also serve more rational purposes, in line with Carpenter's educational goals. "[T]he natural history subjects may [...] be given in their natural sizes with the utmost facility," Carpenter writes.[44] A simple, but ingenious idea. The size of a zebra is obviously different from that of a butterfly! By tilting and shaking the lantern the animals could be brought to life (or a ghost ship made to sail across the rough seas!).

It is strange that Heard does not mention Carpenter's lantern, although it forms a 'missing' link between the 'old-style' phantasmagoria and the later 'rational' uses of the lantern. Heard does discuss Carpenter's other invention (c.1821), the "copper plate slider" that played a role in 'rationalizing' the

lantern show by making it easy and affordable to produce identical high-quality slides in great quantities. He also claims that the copper-plate slider provided inspiration to "dissolving views," a new and influential lantern application; however, it seems unlikely to me that the copper-plate slider was "the flame which ignited the 'dissolving view' process."[45] All the early dissolving slides I have ever seen have been hand-painted.[46] The current debate situates the origins of dissolving views somewhere in the 1820-30s, with Childe and the magician M. Henry being the most important contestants.[47] Heard suggests that their roots may go further back in time, all the way to 1803-04, but his argument in not totally convincing.[48] Still, Heard has found an intriguing newspaper description of a Philipsthal show from as early as 1812. It speaks about a "very sweet illusion on the principle, we suppose of Mr Philipsthal's former production (the Phantasmagoria), the present consists of a series of landscapes (in imitation of moonlight), which insensibly change to various scenes producing a very magical effect."[49] Could this have been dissolving views already, amidst the 'deep time' of Phantasmagoria?

No concrete evidence proves that Philipsthal himself ever *used* a lantern pair – the hallmark of true dissolving views – in his shows. Still, it is remarkable that he traded ghosts and demons for landscapes, pointing to an important future development. In 1827, Childe's "Scenic Views", presented as the finale to a theatrical entertainment at the Adelphi, contained a list of scenes "showing the various effects of light and shade."[50] Whether these were actual (transforming) dissolving views or not, it seems that they had been inspired by the success of the Diorama, opened at Regent's Park in 1823. Childe's list includes subjects that are familiar from the London Diorama (Holyrood Chapel, shown in 1825 and Roslyn Chapel, 1826) and others that would have suited as diorama paintings. A broadside from another showman, M. Henry (1825), draws an explicit connection between his "Dissolvent Scenes" and the Diorama, by describing one his views an "an Imitation of the Paintings at the Diorama."[51] Although he reproduces the broadside, it is surprising that Heard does not point out this connection in his text. Perhaps it has seemed too obvious for him, compared with the revelation that Philipsthal presented landscape views already a decade before the Diorama was invented (of course, both could have been inspired by the *same* source, the vogue for the panorama).[52]

Phantasmagorias of the Mind

A little less than the final third of Heard's book is dedicated to the influence and afterlife of phantasmagoria in various media, from temperance lantern slides and spirit photography to cabarets, stage magic, early trick films and horror movies – he could have added computer games and recent media artworks as well. The treatment is more cursory and fragmented than in the preceding sections, and the research less solid. It almost feels like Heard was in a hurry to get the book finished, and lost his patience. Although he raises many important issues, Heard usually touches upon them briefly before moving on to something else. A case in point, the uncanny phenomenon of spirit photography is certainly relevant to raise in this context. However, several well researched works have been published, and none of them are mentioned in Heard's text.[54]

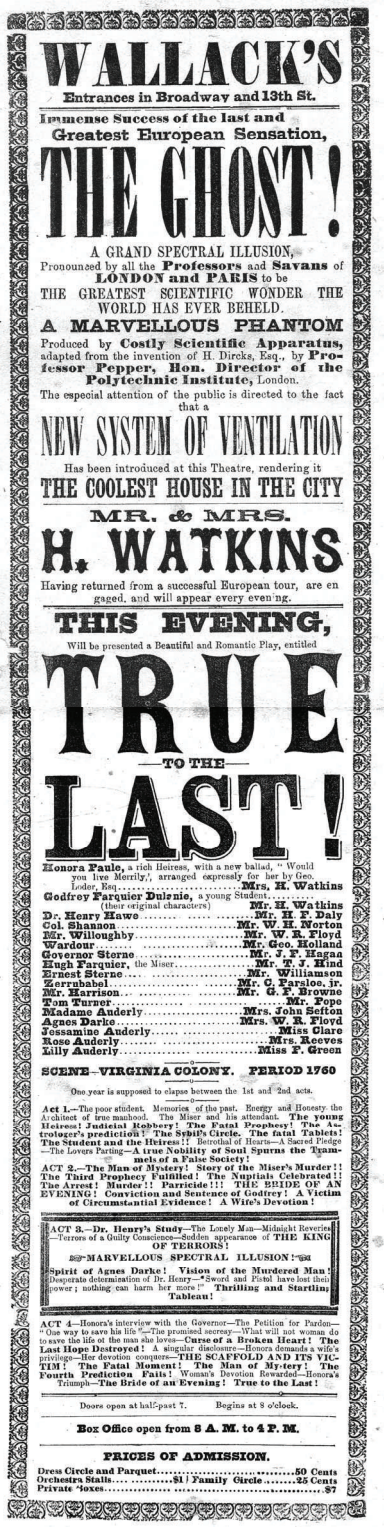
Heard briefly discusses the phantasmagoric aspects of early cinema, but omits obvious references (including Émile Cohl's famous animated film *Fantasmagorie*), and fails to point out the intriguing parallel between the reported audience panic at Robertson's Fantasmagorie and at Lumière's early screenings when *The Train Approaching the Station at La Ciotat* (1895) was shown. The motion 'trope' is the same, but could any connection be discovered between approaching monsters and trains? The issue is complex, and concerns cultural issues, as well as the psychology of perception.[55] As it happens, Altick has referred to a source from 1830, where a bystander compares the trains running towards him on the Liverpool-Manchester railway to a phantasmagoria show: "A spectator observing their approach, when at extreme speed, can scarsely divest himself of the idea, that they are not enlarging and increasing in size rather than moving. I know not how to explain my meaning better, than by referring to the enlargement of objects in a *phantasmagoria*" [my emphasis].[56]

The most inspiring section of the final part is the one dealing with the 'new phantasmagoria' of Pepper's Ghost, invented by Henry Dircks and John Henry Pepper, and first shown at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, London in December 1862.[57] As is well known, the ghost was created by reflecting the illuminated figure of a hidden actor from a sheet of glass, placed between the stage and the auditorium. Apparitions could thus be 'superimposed' on the actions taking place on the stage. The idea was not new. Living humans had already been projected by Robertson, and also by Schirmer and Scholl with their 'Animated Megascope'. The principle, they asserted, had been invented several years before Robertson had begun using it.[58] Even at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, the living human head had already been projected in giant size by the popular 'physioscope.'[59] In France, the magician Henri Robin contested Dircks's and Pepper's priority, which led to a bitter dispute.[60] What made Pepper's Ghost a sensation was not just Pepper's ruthless promotion, but the seamless merging of the physical and the virtual he had achieved, as well as the mystery surrounding its hidden apparatus. "How is it done?" must have been a favourite topic of discussion both in London and Paris (where Pepper's and Robin's ghosts competed with each other), as it had been decades earlier in the case of the "Invisible Lady," as Matlock has shown.[61]

The Phantasmagoric tradition moves from medium to medium: A stereocard inspired by Pepper's Ghost. USA, 1860-70s. Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles.

History 'repeated itself' in other ways as well. Like Philipsthal's Phantasmagoria, Pepper's Ghost never existed independently – it was always "framed" by other acts and attractions. Most often it was presented as the climax of a playlet that had been chosen, adapted or written for the purpose. Pepper's Ghost was truly a 'special effect'; more important as an attraction than the content of the playlet or the actors. Because of the fictional framework, the presence of 'real' spirits was not an issue, although the vogue for spirit photography may well have been an inspiration. Like both Philipsthal and Robertson, Pepper also patented his 'invention,' which did not prevent others from exploiting it. Beside the licenced Pepper's Ghosts, a competing "Ghost Illusion (King's Patent)" was also touring the British Isles. It was presented at the Prince's Theatre in Glasgow on September 1863, as part of a two-act play called *Stricken Oak*.[62] The climax was the "sudden and spiritual appearance of the murdered Amy." In the end of the first act, "the warning spirit of her mother" had already appeared in an "astounding optical climax." The broadside lists the actors, while the Ghost is said to be represented "by itself". In August 1863 Pepper's Ghost, advertised as the "Greatest European Sensation", landed in New York, where it was adapted to the romantic play *True to the Last!* at Wallack's Theatre.[63] These developments, as well as Pepper's later attraction *Proteus*, deserve to be incorporated into the history.[64]

While Heard points out some directions for future research into the phantasmagoric tradition, there is one big issue that only appears between the lines: phantasmagoria's "discursive history." Phantasmagoria did not exist merely as a particular kind of show and technique, but also as a notion that manifested itself in myriad forms, from the showman's broadsides and newspaper notices to satirical prints, book titles, popular sayings, literary metaphors, theoretical figures and advertising slogans.[65] Such discursive 'phantasmagorias' are no less interesting and relevant than the material forms. Through them, thousands of people, who never had a chance to see an actual phantasmagoria show, were nevertheless brought into contact



WALLACK'S

Entrances in Broadway and 13th St.

Immense Success of the last and Greatest European Sensation,

THE GHOST!

A GRAND SPECTRAL ILLUSION,
Pronounced by all the **Professors** and **Savans** of **LONDON and PARIS** to be THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC WONDER THE WORLD HAS EVER BEHELD.

A MARVELLOUS PHANTOM

Produced by **Costly Scientific Apparatus,** adapted from the invention of H. Dircks, Esq., by **Professor Pepper, Hon. Director of the Polytechnic Institute,** London.

The especial attention of the public is directed to the fact that a

NEW SYSTEM OF VENTILATION

Has been introduced at this Theatre, rendering it

THE COOLEST HOUSE IN THE CITY

MR. & MRS.

H. WATKINS

Having returned from a successful European tour, are engaged, and will appear every evening.

THIS EVENING,

Will be presented a Beautiful and Romantic Play, entitled

TRUE —TO THE— LAST!

Honora Faule, a rich Heiress, with a new ballad, "Would you live Merrily', arranged expressly for her by Geo. Loder, Esq. ..... Mrs. H. Watkins
Godfrey Farquier Duisnie, a young Student, (their original characters) ..... Mr. H. Watkins
Dr. Henry Hawe ..... Mr. H. F. Daly
Col. Shannon ..... Mr. W. H. Norton
Mr. Willoughby ..... Mr. W. R. Floyd
Wardour ..... Mr. Geo. Holland
Governor Sterne ..... Mr. J. F. Hagan
Hugh Farquier, the Miser ..... Mr. E. J. Rind
Ernest Sterne ..... Mr. Williamson
Zerrubabel ..... Mr. C. Parsloe, jr.
Mr. Harrison ..... Mr. G. F. Browne
Tom Turner ..... Mr. Fope
Madame Auderly ..... Mrs. John Sefton
Agnes Darke ..... Mrs. W. R. Floyd
Jessamine Auderly ..... Miss Clare
Rose Auderly ..... Mrs. Reeves
Lilly Auderly ..... Miss F. Green

SCENE—VIRGINIA COLONY. PERIOD 1760

One year is supposed to elapse between the 1st and 2nd acts.

Act 1.—The poor student. Memories of the past. Energy and Honesty the Architect of true manhood. The Miser and his attendant. **The young Heiress! Judicial Robbery! The Fatal Prophesy! The Astrologer's prediction! The Sybil's Circle. The fatal Tablets! The Student and the Heiress!!** Betrothal of Hearts—A Sacred Pledge —The Lovers Parting—**A true Nobility of Soul Spurns the Trammels of a False Society!**

ACT 2.—The Man of Mystery! Story of the Miser's Murder!! The Third Prophecy Fulfilled! The Nuptials Celebrated!! The Arrest! Murder!! Parricide!!! THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING! Conviction and Sentence of Godfrey! A Victim of Circumstantial Evidence! A Wife's Devotion!

ACT 3.—Dr. Henry's Study—The Lonely Man—Midnight Reveries —Terrors of a Guilty Conscience—Sudden appearance of **THE KING OF TERRORS!**

☞ **MARVELLOUS SPECTRAL ILLUSION!** ☜

Spirit of Agnes Darke! Vision of the Murdered Man! Desperate determination of Dr. Henry—"Sword and Pistol have lost their power; nothing can harm her more!" **Thrilling and Startling Tableau!**

ACT 4—Honora's interview with the Governor—The Petition for Pardon—"One way to save his life"—The promised secrecy—What will not woman do to save the life of the man she loves—**Curse of a Broken Heart! The Last Hope Destroyed!** A singular disclosure—Honora demands a wife's privilege—Her devotion conquers—**THE SCAFFOLD AND ITS VICTIM! The Fatal Moment! The Man of Mystery! The Fourth Prediction Fails!** Woman's Devotion Rewarded—Honora's Triumph—**The Bride of an Evening! True to the Last!**

Doors open at half-past 7. Begins at 8 o'clock.

Box Office open from 8 A. M. to 4 P. M.

PRICES OF ADMISSION.

Dress Circle and Parquet ..... 50 Cents
Orchestra Stalls ..... $1 | Family Circle ..... 25 Cents
Private Boxes $7

Pepper's Ghost Goes West: Probably its first appearance at Wallack's, New York, August 1863. Broadside.

Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles

with the concept, no matter how vague their idea of its original meaning may have been. As a figure of discourse, phantasmagoria is still part of the fabric of world culture. In this sense it is alive and well, although as a material form it has disappeared long ago, or metamorphosed into other cultural forms. Of course, it would be too much to ask Heard to have covered all this. Rather, I am presenting this as a challenge for future researchers. Some pioneering works (none of them mentioned by Heard) come to mind: Max Milner's book *La Fantasmagorie* (1982), Terry Castle's study "Phantasmagoria and The Metaphorics of Modern Reverie", included in her book *The Female Thermometer* (1995), and Margaret Cohen's article "Walter Benjamin's Phantasmagoria."[66]

While Milner deals more generally with optical themes found in literature – particularly in the highly 'phantasmagoric' oeuvre of E.T.A. Hoffmann – Castle has concentrated on tracing the afterlife and transformations of the word "phantasmagoria" itself. She convincingly demonstrates its widespread adoption by poets and novelists, beginning with Henry Lemoine's poem "Phantasmagoria," published in *Gentleman's Magazine* in June 1802, and obviously influenced by Philipsthal's shows. For Castle, the changes in the ways in which the word was used during the 19th century signal a wide cultural transformation through which the ghosts were gradually 'relocated.' Instead of haunting us from the "outside" they were increasingly seen as products of the mind. The very act of thinking came to be seen as "spectral," a kind of ghost producing activity. Castle's explorations lead to fascinating questions about exteriority and interiority, normality and pathology. Cohen's study of the notion of phantasmagoria in Walter Benjamin's thinking, on the other hand, concentrates on its political and ideological implications. For Marx, phantasmagoria came to signify to process of commodification, where the relationship between commodities and their production was mystified; the material forces behind the products were hidden from bourgeois consumers much like Robertson's Fantascope was kept behind the screen. For Benjamin, phantasmagoria represented the new frenzy of consumerism that found its manifestion in 19th century Paris. Benjamin, of course, often commented on the new optical spectacles themselves, and was in a position to fully theorize their metaphorical and ideological implications.

Finally, a note about Heard's discourse. Even when he writes as a "Professor", he is also a "professor" – a showman and a storyteller. He likes to embellish his discourse with colorful and humoristic metaphors. These can be clever and entertaining, but sometimes a bit "too much." One example may suffice. According to Heard, Philidor used his reputation "to secure a gig in Groningen and milk the good burghers dry." [67]
Such verbal acrobatics may suit the topic, but at times it clouds the matter itself, making Heard's argumentation inexact. Heard's passion for story-telling also has the effect of pushing the dialogue with other scholars to the background, although he has clearly read his sources. Heard writes as if all the problematic issues had been solved, which of course is not the case.

Things were different in Heard's earlier articles that were clearly argued, and everyone's contributions were acknowledged in the text, not just in the footnotes. What happened? Did Heard try to make his text more appealing for the general audience, or did he simply grow tired with the academic text he had spent so much time developing? Considering the status of Heard's book as the most authoritative statement on phantasmagoria - probably for years to come – I find this a little unfortunate, but still, we should be pleased with what we have got and congratulate Heard for his achievement. Anyone interested in early visual media, and audiovisual culture in general, should have this book, and not just 'haunting' the bookshelf!

Phantasmagoria before Phantasmagoria: 18th century Memento Mori slide. Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles

Notes and References

1. Mervyn Heard: "Paul de Philipsthal & The Phantasmagoria in England, Scotland and Ireland," *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, "Part One: Boo!" (Vol.8, No 1, October 1996, 2-7): "Part Two: Shoo!" (Vol.8. No 2, October 1997, 11-16); "Part Three: Phew!" (Vol.8, No 4, December 1999, 6-13). See also: Mervyn Heard: "Now you see it, now you don't. The Magician and The Magic Lantern," in *Realms of Light. Uses and Perceptions of the Magic Lantern from the 17th to the 21st Century*, edited by Richard Crangle, Mervyn Heard and Ine van Dooren, London: The Magic Lantern Society, 2005, 13-24 (the book contains other texts by Heard as well).

2. New information about Paul Philidor's early career has probably been provided by the magic lantern historian Deac Rossell, who has also translated the German language sources into English. Rossell is known to have been working on his own 'definitive' history of the magic lantern for years (already announced by Fuesslin Verlag), so sharing his research material with Heard is a generous gesture.

3. I will make some critical comments about Heard's research in a constructive 'spirit'. The book is based on an academic Ph.D. dissertation, so it should stand such critique. As the first extensive study of phantasmagoria for the general public it will certainly have an effect on how phantasmagoria will be understood from now on.

4. See Hermann Hecht: "The History of Projecting Phantoms, Ghosts and Apparitions," *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Part 1 (Vol.3, No 1, February 1984, 2-6); Part 2 (Vol.3., No 2, December 1984, 2-6); Francoise Levie: *Étienne-Gaspard Robertson. La vie d'un fantasmagore*, Bruxelles and Longueil: Les Editions du Préambule et SOFIDOC, 1990; Laurent Mannoni: *Le grand art de la lumière et de l'ombre*, Paris: Nathan Université, 1994 [in English: *The Great Art of Light and Shadow*, translated by Richard Crangle, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000]. Thomas Weynants has reminded

me about the contributions made by the recently deceased British magic lantern enthusiast and showman Mike Bartley, who reconstructed phantasmagoria-related objects, organized demonstrations and is also said to have translated Robertson's *Mémoirs* for his private use and to have been working on a book on the topic, 'Handbook for Fantasmagores'. Its status remains unclear. I thank Weynants, himself a well-known Phantasmagoria specialist, for this information.

5. To mention just one example, Margaret Cohen repeats this misconception in her article "Walter Benjamin's Phantasmagoria," *New German Critique*, No 48, Autumn 1989, 91. As her primary source of information, Cohen uses G.-M. Coissac's *Histoire du Cinématographe* (Paris: Editions du 'Cinéopse,'1925 [sic]), which proves that Heard's book was badly needed, indeed!

6. The first scholar to have have discovered Philidor performing in Berlin and later in Paris seems to have been Hecht in "The History of Projecting Phantoms, Ghosts and Apparitions," Part 2, 4-5.

7. According to Hecht, Philadelphia was an American showman whose real name was Jacob Meyer. He was active in Europe in the late 18th century using a magic lantern in his ghost shows, projecting on smoke screenings. See Hecht: "The History of Projecting Phantoms, Ghosts and Apparitions," Part 2, 4.

8. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, p.58.

9. According to Heard 'Philipsthal' had mentioned so to a reporter. Unfortunately, he does not mention his source (Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 58).

10. See Mannoni's discussion of the available sources, *Le Grand art de la lumière et de l'ombre*, 144.

11. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 84.

12. Idem.

13. Philidor used the word "Phantasmorasi" about his performance in Vienna, 1790. See broadside reproduced in Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 56.

14. *Madame Tussaud's Memoirs and Reminiscences of France, Forming an Abridged History of the French Revolution*. Edited by Francis Hervé, London: Saunders and Otley, 1838. (Copy at UCLA Research Library Special Collections). John Barnes writes about Philipsthal's and Tussaud's relationship, mentioning the *Memoirs* as the primary source, in the *Catalogue of Collection, Part 2: Optical Projection*, Saint Ives: Barnes Museum of Cinematography, 1970, 29. For Barnes, by the way, Philipsthal is German. The Philipsthal-Tussaud partnership had already been mentioned by Stanley Mayers in *The Great Belzoni*, London 1959, 65-66.

15. Anita Leslie & Pauline Chapman: *Madame Tussaud. Waxworker Extraordinary*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1978, 63. The book is obviously based on archival research, but unfortunately it does not contain references, only a select bibliography.

16. Madame Tussaud's Memoirs and Reminiscences of France, Forming an Abridged History of the French Revolution, 249-251.

17. Étienne-Gaspard Robertson: *Mémoires récréatifs scientifiques et anecdotiques*, Paris: chez l'auteur, et à la librairie de Wurtz, 1831-33. According to a newspaper report, Robertson had been asked to show the likeness of Louis XVI, to which he had responded that he may have had the 'recipe' before the revolution, but that he had forgotten it since, and it would be impossible to make kings return to France (I, 133). Of course, this could also be used to prove Tussaud's story: Robertson could have been aware of what happened to Philidor, and would have tried to avoid a similar mistake. More sources would be needed.

18. Barnes thought that Tussaud has simply mixed up Philipsthal with Robertson "about whom a similar story is also related." Barnes, however, did not know about Philidor and still thought that Robertson was the inventor of phantasmagoria. Barnes: *Catalogue of Collection, Part 2, 28-29.*

19. Altick speaks about "a French [sic] showman named Paul de Philipstal [sic]", again without quoting a source. (Richard Altick: *The Shows of London*, Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press, 1978, 217.) Altick clearly sees phantasmagoria as a minor episode among the many types of shows he covers.

20. Leslie and Chapman, 99. We meet Tussaud's "old friend" Philipstal [sic] again in Pamela Pilbeam's *Madame Tussaud and the History of Waxworks*, London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2003, 63. Here again the narrative on the Tussaud- Philipsthal relationship has been influenced by Heard's articles. In Paris the climax of Phillipsthal's show was according to Pilbeam "a red devil, complete with cloven hooves, whose face successively resembled Marat, Danton and finally Robespierre," but Louis XVI also appeared again, mistakenly withdrawn upwards, giving "the illusion that that [sic] the monarch was ascending to heaven" (59). It is amazing how easily such myths are created a - a pity that Heard did not correct it, reminding others of the simple fact that slides are inserted in the lantern upside down!

21. Again, Heard only refers to this key source material through quotations from Leslie's and Chapman's biography. Obviously he has not consulted the actual letters that might contain further leads. However, clearly Philipsthal is only a secondary character in the literature on Tussaud and wax museums.

22. Kate Berridge: *Madame Tussaud. A Life in Wax*, New York: HarperCollins, 2006. Here Philipstal [sic] is German, and the slide of Louis XVI is again impossibly "flying upwards as if ascending to heaven" (145). Philipstal is travelling to Paris to propose a professional partnership to Marie (176), etc. etc.

23. *Sketch of the Performances, at the Large Theatre, Lyceum; and a Short Account of the Origin, History, and Explanation of all the late Optical and Acoustic Discoveries, called the Phantasmagoria, Ergascopia, Phantascopia, Mesoscopia, &c. Together with the Invisible Girl*, London, 1805. No author is mentioned on the title page. As a great service to future scholars, The Projection Box has published a facsimile version of this rare booklet on its website, http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/s-herbert/ergas.htm (link last visited on Oct. 31, 2006).

24. Ibid., 15, 16, 19. See Heard: "Paul de Philipsthal; Part One", 3. The source is listed here – inexactly - as Schirmer and Scholl: *Sketch of the Performances and a short account of the Origin, History and Explanation of the Ergascopia, Phantasmagoria, Pantascopia, Mesoscopia, &. and the Invisible Girl*. London, 1805. The footnote mentions that the copy consulted is in the B[ritish] M[useum].

25. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 169, 179.

26. *Sketch of the Performances, at the Large Theatre, Lyceum; and a Short Account of the Origin, History, and Explanation of all the late Optical and Acoustic Discoveries, called the Phantasmagoria, Ergascopia, Phantascopia, Mesoscopia, &c. Together with the Invisible Girl,*19. As if to confirm the mistake, the statement continues: "[B]ut, in the same slow degree, as it retrogrades, the spectre seems to retire, and vanish in a point or a star, at an immense distance". In the booklet, Schirmer & Scholl talk about their earlier tours on the European continent, as well as their role as successors to Karl Enslen who is credited as the inventor of "people projection", called here Ergascopia." For his "scientific production", Enslin is said to have got a large Estate near "Dantzig," "where he now lives and enjoys the fruits of his talents and industry," as a gift from "His Prussian Majesty" (18). Little is known about Schirmer & Scholl, either before or after their Lyceum appearance, from other sources, which is a challenge for future scholars. The booklet also mentions the names of several other phantasmagoria showmen, about whom little is known. In France, Professor Bienvenu is said to have exhibited at Theatre de Feydeau in Paris with great success, and the Polish Mr. Olivier to have toured "in the different provinces of France" (17). More information about these and other phantasmagores would be needed to establish a true "phantasmagorographia". There are broadsides for Professor Bienvenu's shows in the Francois Binetruy Collection in Versailles.

27. A detailed predecessor to Heard's explanation is David Robertson's very lucid and clear exposé of Robertson's Fantasmagorie, "Robinson on Robertson," in *The Ten Year Book*, Edited by Mike Smith, David Henry and Dennis Crompton, London: The Magic Lantern Society of Great Britain, 1986, 4-13.

28. There are no less than five French Fantascopes in the Francois Binetruy Collection, Versailles. The earliest one (1820-30) still has its original stand on wheels. The famous Fantascope (c.1850, attributed to Lerebours) from the Thomas Weynants collection has been deposited in the French Cinematheque's new Museum of Cinema, where it is permanently on display.

29. See David Robinson: *Masterpieces of Animation 1833-1908*, special issue, *Griffithiana*, anno XIV, No 43, Dicembre 1991.

30. See Maurice Dorikens: *Joseph Plateau 1801-1883. Living Between Art and Science*, Gent: Provincieraad van Oost-Vlanderen, 2001, 72. This extraordinary disc is translucent and meant to be lighted from behind when spinning. It was a kind of hybrid disc for the phenakistiscope and the anorthoscope, another of Plateau's inventions. Another similar disc shows a devil, shown in close-up blowing into a fire (ibid., 70). Both discs are based on original drawings by the artist J.B.Madou. They were never reproduced and released commercially. The originals are kept in the Plateau Collection, Museum of Science, University of Ghent, Belgium. I had an opportunity to examine them personally in September 2006.

31. The cover of the box is by J. B. Madou, as can be proven by a comparison to Madou's sketches of similar demonic figures kept in the Plateau collection, Museum of Science, University of Ghent (see Dorikens: *Joseph Plateau*, 66, 68). The only known surviving example of this set, published by Dero-Becker in Brussels and dated on the cover 1834, is in the Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles. Its existence was not known to Maurice Dorikens, the curator of the Plateau Collection in the University of Ghent, at the time of organizing Joseph Plateau's 200th anniversary exhibition in 2001, for which the book mentioned in the previous footnote was produced. The only mention acknowledging the existence of this set can be found from Mannoni: *Le grand art de la lumiere et de l'ombre*, 209. According to Mannoni, the Belgian edition was published around December 1833.

32. Francoise Levie: *Lanterne magique et fantasmagorie. Inventaire des collections*. Paris: Conservatoire national des arts et métiers / Musée national des techniques, 1990.

33. The Fantasmagorie session is listed as experience No 29, which is the final one. See the programme leaflet, c. 1800, reproduced in Laurent Mannoni, Donata Pesenti Campagnoni and David Robinson: *Light and Movement. Incunabula of the Motion Picture 1420-1896*, Pordenone: Le giornate del cinema muto / Cinémathèque francaise-Musée du Cinéma / Museo Nazionale del Cinema, 1995, 118-119. It is important to note that Fantasmagorie was used both as the name of the venue itself and as the title of its top attraction!

34. Jann Matlock: "Voir aux limites des corps: fantasmagories et femmes invisibles dans les spectacles de Robertson," in *Lanternes magiques Tableaux transparents*, catalogue établi et rédigée par Ségolène Le Men, Paris: Èditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1995, 82-99. This well documented study has not been used by Heard. A different English language version was published as "The Invisible Woman and her Secrets Unveiled", *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, Vol.9, No 2, 1996, 175-221.

35. This fits well within the tendency observed at the British theaters of the time to emphasize the role of scenery and mechanical effects at the expense of the story-line and the actors, a trend that already can be traced back to de Loutherbourg's innovations under Garrick at Drury Lane.

36. Heard, 167.

37. David Robinson: "Magic Lantern Sensations of 1827," *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Vol.8., No 4, December 1999, 14-15; and a continuation "Further Adventures of the Flying Dutchman," *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Vol.9, No 4, Summer 2003, 59-60.

38. Based on the first-hand report by the German prince Puecklar-Muskau. See my article "The Great Stereopticon Panorama: About the Intermedial Relationship between the Moving Panorama and the Magic Lantern Show," in *The Proceedings of the 2004 International Panorama Conference* (in press).

39. This topic has been dealt with in detail by Hudson John Powell: *Poole's Myriorama! A story of travelling showmen*, Bradford on Avon: ELSP, 2002.

40. Hecht: "The History of Projecting Phantoms... Part 2", 6. Hecht also has several other references linking Goethe's *Faust* to Phantasmagoria. The developments discussed in this paragraph have not been dealt with by Heard.

41. Although the ghost ship became a brief fashion that was adopted by other theaters, it seems that the idea of the body-mounted lantern had few uses in spite of its innovativeness, and was soon dropped by Carpenter. It seems that the early Carpenter lantern with the metal loops at the back in the Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles, is the only one known. In later editions of the Carpenter's booklet, the original belt-mounted lantern has been replaced by the more common model of the Improved Phantasmagoria lantern that the projectionist just holds in his hands; this model has no handle or loops for the strap. Robinson's later article reveals that when Childe had been attracted by a competitor, the Surrey Theatre, to perform his lantern tricks there in 1829, the lantern equipment had been specially executed by two well-known London-based opticians, Dollond and Jones (Robinson: "Further Adventures of the Flying Dutchman," 60).

42. John Barnes: "Philip Carpenter 1776-1833", *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Vol.3, No 2, December 1984, 9. Barnes also says that the shop on 111 New Street, Birmingham, was continued until 1837, when it was transferred to a Mr. R. Field. In another article ("The Pieces Fit," *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Vol.3, No 1, February 1984, 8-9), David Henry published an undated trade card of Carpenter & Westley, operating from 111 New Street, Birmingham. The card also mentions Carpenter, 24 Regent St. London. Obviously the Birmingham business was continued by Mary Carpenter and William Westley after Philip Carpenter's move to London. When Philip Carpenter died in 1833, Mary Carpenter and William Westley took over his London business, and renamed it Carpenter & Westley in 1835. On the other hand, Henry's article also contains the title page of *Elements of Zoology,* which indicated that it was published by Rowland Hunter in London, 1823 (8). While this does not prove anything, it shows that Carpenter probably already had local representation in London before his actual move, which would make sense.

43. The first edition of the booklet, without the title page (the copy from John and William Barnes collection), has been reproduced in *Light and Movement*, 125-131.

44. Ibid., 129.

45. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 197.

46. This is also supported by Stephen Herbert in his entry "Dissolving views" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Magic Lantern*, edited by David Robinson, Stephen Herbert and Richard Crangle, London: The Magic Lantern Society, 2001, 90-91. Later, photographic slides were adapted to be used as dissolving views. I would like to use this opportunity to thank Stephen Herbert for his critical comments about my manuscript.

47. See Edwin Dawes and Mervyn Heard: "M. Henry's Dissolving Views", in *Realms of Light*, 159-161. According to this article, the first *documented* use of dissolving views was by M. Henry in 1826, however, using the concept "Dissolvent Views;" further, the first *documented* example of Childe's use of the magic lantern is only from January 1827, when the *The Flying Dutchman* premiered at the Adelphi. He did not use dissolving views in this context. Whether "Dissolvent Views" were actual dissolving views, realized with a lantern pair, has been questioned by John Barnes, who thinks that "'Dissolvent' here [in a playbill from 1833] implies that the light was gradually lowered in the lantern, the view changed

for that of another, and the light again increased". In such a case, only a single lantern would have been used. According to Barnes, the first time he has seen the expression "Dissolving Views" used is in two playbills (Barnes Collection), both from the Adelphi, 1837; the lanternist was Childe. (Barnes: *Catalogue of Collection, Part 2, 31)*.

48. Heard discusses an article entitled "Dissolving Views" that appeared in *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction*, February 12, 1842 (reproduced in Stephen Herbert: *A History of Pre-Cinema*, Volume 2, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, 233-236). In the article Edward Marmaduke Clarke talks to the reporter about his father's (a famous optician in Dublin) role in the invention of dissolving views. According to him, it would have happened by accident, after "Phillipstall" [sic] on his sea voyage to Dublin would have lost his magic lantern in a storm and asked Clarke Sr. to construct a new one [in its own way this story shows that the equipment must have been simple and easy to replace – E.H.]. While testing it "Phillipstall" would have got the idea of using two lanterns simultaneously; Clarke Sr. would have promised to keep the secret. Heard thinks this may have happened already between 1803-04, during Philipsthal's only known trip to Ireland. However, Heard also claims that according to Clarke, "Childe had acquired the technique [of dissolving views] from his former employer Philipsthal." (Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 200). In fact, Clarke says *the opposite*: "It is highly probably that this gentleman [Childe] knew nothing of what had transpired in Dublin, and it is the opinion of Mr. Clarke, optician, 428, Strand, that he richly deserves the credit of an inventor [...]" ("Dissolving Views", in Herbert, 234). Also, there does not seem to be any concrete evidence proving that Childe had been employed by Philipsthal. Heard gives his 'hero' Philipsthal credits that he probably does not deserve.

49. *The Times*, 3 February 1812, quoted by Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 196.

50. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 204.

51. Ibid., 205.

52. The words "dissolving views," "dioramic views," or simply diorama were often used interchangeably in 19th century magic lantern broadsides.

53. The well known horror adventure games *Phantasmagoria* (1995) and *Phantasmagoria: A Puzzle of Flesh* (1996) by Sierra On-Line are probably the most familiar connotations of "phantasmagoria" to many younger people. They clearly belong to the phantasmagoric tradition. The first features among other things an evil demon conjured up by a magician. I would also like to use this opportunity to correct a slip: the silent horror film *Nosferatu* was directed by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, not by Fritz Lang, who directed the *Dr. Mabuse* series (Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 262). When it comes to media art, the influence of phantasmagoria is clear, among other works, in Zoe Beloff's CD-ROM's, films and installations, as well as in Tony Oursler's *The Influence Machine*. See the catalogue *Tony Oursler Influence Machine*, New York: Artangel and the Public Art Fund, 2000.

54. See Tom Gunning: "Phantom Images and Modern Manifestations: Spirit Photography, Magic Theater, Trick Films and Photography's Uncanny," in *Fugitive Images from Photography to Video* edited by Patrice Petro, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, 42-71; Rolf H. Krauss: *Beyond Light and Shadow: The Role of Photography in Certain Paranormal Phenomena: An Historical Survey*, Munich and Tucson, AZ: Nazraeli Press, 1995; Cyril Permutt: *Beyond the Spectrum: A Survey of Supernormal Photography*, Cambridge: Patrick Stephens, 1983; Clément Chéroux, Andreas Fischer et al.: *The Perfect Medium: Photography and the Occult*, New York and London: Yale University Press, 2005.

55. See Stephen Bottomore: "The Panicking Audience? Early cinema and the train effect," *Historical Journal of Film Radio and Television*, Vol. 19, no.2, June 1999, 189-90. Bottomore does not discuss the parallel with Robertson's Fantasmagorie, although he has noticed the source from 1830 linking approaching trains to phantasmagoria, mentioned in the next footnote (Bottomore, 191). In my "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd. Towards an Archeology of the Media" (in *Electronic Culture*, edited by Timothy Druckrey, New York: Aperture 1996, 296-303, 425-427), I suggested that such recurring cultural motives could be treated as "topoi" (topos). I linked the audience reactions at Fantasmagorie and the Lumière screenings to those triggered by the *Captain EO* attraction at a themepark, based on my own observations.

56. "A Railer" (Rev. Edward Stanley), *Blackwood's Magazine*, 28 (1830), 825. Quoted by Altick: *The Shows of London*, 219.

57. For an essential but self-serving source, see John Henry Pepper: *The True History of Pepper's Ghost* [original title: "A True History of The Ghost and All About Metempsychosis"], London: The Projection Box, 1996 [orig. 1890]. The book has an introduction by Heard.

58. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 101-102. Taken as a cultural desire to see actual human beings projected, this effect is the clearest anticipation of the early cinema. However, its 'liveness' in a way points beyond cinema, to television (just like the always 'live' camera obscura image).

59. Lester Smith: "Entertainment and Amusement, Education and Instruction: Lectures at the Royal Polytechnic Institution", in *Realms of Light*, 139.

60. See Mannoni: *Le grand art de la lumière et de l'ombre*, 235-237. There is a spectacular advertising fan for Robin's "Spectres Vivants et Impalpables" in the Francois Binetruy Collection, Versailles. On one side, we see a stage with no less than four ghosts and an actor piercing one of them with a sword; on the other side, there is a city view that also shows the facade of Salle Robin, where the show was performed.

61. See Matlock's studies mentioned earlier.

62. Broadside in the Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles.

63. Broadside in the Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles.

64. See, however, Pepper: *The True History of Pepper's Ghost* and Hudson John Powell: *Poole's Myriorama!*, passim.

65. Several satirical prints were inspired by Philipsthal's show. Heard has analyzed only one of them, James Gillray's "A PHANTASMAGORIA; Scene Conjuring up an Armed Skeleton," satirizing the recent Amiens treaty between England and France, 1802 (Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 159). Another print, titled "A New Phantasmagoria for John Bull," drawn by George Woodward and published by Rudolph Ackermann in 1805, shows Napoleon and Josephine crossing the British Channel as 'specters,' rear-projected from the French side with a magic lantern. Like Philipsthal, the showman speaks broken English. I am wondering if this print could – beside its obvious political content – also imply that Philipsthal (who is not mentioned by name) was French? (Huhtamo Collection, Los Angeles).

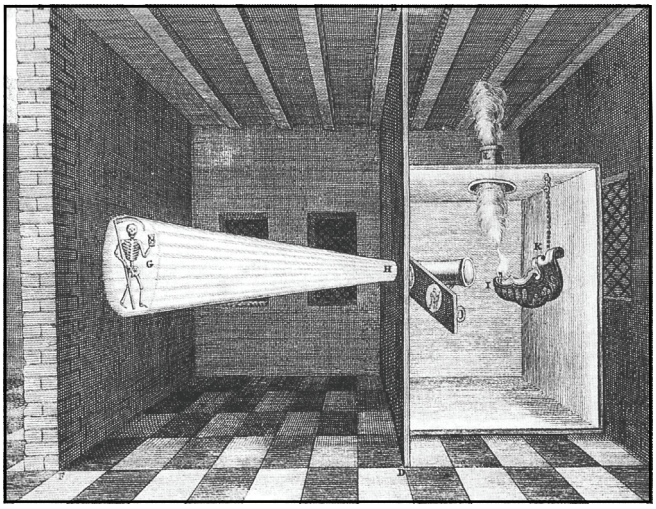
66. Max Milner: *La Fantasmagorie*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982; Terry Castle: *The Female Thermometer. Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995; Cohen: "Walter Benjamin's Phantasmagoria," op.cit. Tom Gunning has also produced an interesting study about phantasmagoria, "Illusions Past and Future: the Phantasmagoria and its Specters." I would like to thank Gunning for a copy of his manuscript that deserves to be published.

67. Heard: *Phantasmagoria*, 58-59. This sentence cannot possibly be from his Ph.D.?

This page inaugurates a new feature of the *Gazette*, **The Research Page**, which will present short synopses of research on the magic lantern published in academic journals in a variety of disciplines. For those who do not have access to a university library, PDF versions of most of these articles can be obtained from the Editor.

Koen Vermeir. 2005. The magic of the magic lantern (1660-1700): on analogical demonstration and the visualization of the invisible. *British Journal for the History of Science* 38:127-159.

In this richly illustrated article, Koen Vermeir reviews the early history of the magic lantern in Europe in relation to both science and the occult. He focuses particular attention on the way in which the lantern was used by Athanasius Kircher. He places Kircher's illustrations and description of the magic lantern in the context of his treatment of other optical devices, such as magic mirrors and sun clocks, as well as his metaphysical philosophy. Although most historians have considered Kircher's illustrations to be inaccurate because they show the lens tube of the lantern in the wrong place in relation to the slide, Vermeir argues that these illustrations actually depict what is described in Kircher's text, a point light-source projection apparatus that provides very poor magnification of the images on the slides. He further argues that rather than being a mistake, Kircher actually may have preferred this design for a candle-powered projector, because it would allow for long-distance projection of images without making them impossibly large on a screen.



One of Kircher's illustrations of the magic lantern, with the lens located between the light source and the slide, a configuration usually interpreted as a mistake, a conclusion questioned by Vermeir's analysis. From *The Encylopaedia of the Magic Lantern*. © The Magic Lantern Society.

Iwan Rhys Morus. 2006. Seeing and believing science. *Isis* 97:101-110.

This article examines the history and use of the magic lantern as part of the overall visual culture of the sciences, with mention of other visual spectacles such as panoramas and phantasmagoria shows. The author argues that we need to consider such exhibitions, including magic lantern shows, in the context of the times in which they were presented, as "performances and technologies that were avowedly designed to misdirect or mislead the senses" in ways that were both entertaining and educational. He is critical of many previous historians of these visual technologies because he believes that they have tended to view the magic lantern as milestones on the way to the development of cinema, rather than experiences in their own right. He singles out the exhibition catalog by Laurent Mannoni, Werner Nekes and Marina Warner, *Eyes, Lies, and Illusions* (Haward Gallery, London, 2004) and to a lesser extent Mannoni's *The Great Art of Light and Shadow* (Exeter University Press, 2000) for particular criticism.

David B. Clarke and Marcus A. Doel. 2005. Engineering space and time: moving pictures and motionless trips. *Journal of Historical Geography* 31:41-60.

This wide-ranging article brings the perspective of a pair of geographers to the study of images, including magic lantern slides, phantasmagoria, film, still and moving panoramas, dioramas, and the stereoscope. The main argument of the article is that these various forms of visual entertainment paralleled the effects of new technologies, such as railroads, in reconfiguring notions of reality, transporting spectators to distant locations in space and time without the spectators actually moving. They see the cinema, and particularly early travel films, as perfecting a trend toward abstraction of space and time independent of actuality that began with the magic lantern and other early visual media.

Beth Haller and Robin Larsen. 2005. Persuading sanity: Magic lantern images and the nineteenth-century moral treatment in America. *Journal of American Culture* 28:259-272.

This fascinating article describes the important role of the magic lantern in the treatment of patients at the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, beginning in the 1840s. The authors describe the close collaboration between Dr. Thomas Kirkbride and the Langenheim brothers, the inventors of the photographic lantern slide. Dr. Kirkbride's lantern slide collection still exists in the Atwater Kent Museum in Philadelphia and covers a wide range of subjects from travel to science.

Please note that the contact address information in the announcements of the conference on the magic lantern and the research prize were incorrect in the Fall 2006 issue of the *Gazette*. These announcements are reprinted below with the correct information.

Call for Papers
Invitational Conference on the Magic Lantern
May 29-30, Magic Lantern Castle Museum, San Antonio, Texas

The Magic-Lantern Society of the United States and Canada is hosting an interdisciplinary academic conference on the magic lantern in America and Canada.

Of particular interest will be papers documenting the extent and nature of the use of the magic lantern itself, those relating it to other aspects of life and ideas at the time, and those exploring the connection to the movies. Academic affiliation is not a requirement for participation.

The conference will be held on May 29-30, 2007 at The Magic Lantern Castle museum in San Antonio, TX. The museum contains America's most extensive collection of magic lanterns, lantern slides, and related materials, and includes an large library of catalogs, trade journals, etc. Ample time will be allowed for exploring the museum's resources, and for informal exchanges.

Those interested in presenting should send a one-page proposal in electronic form to **Professor Erkki Huhtamo, UCLA Department of Design | Media Arts, Broad Art Center, Rm. 2275, Box 951456 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1456 (erhuhta@ucla.edu)** by Jan. 1, 2007.

$1,000 Prize
for
Magic-Lantern Research

The Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada announces a $1,000 yearly prize for the best research related to the magic-lantern by a graduate student in the United States or Canada. Winning papers must be at least 15 pages in length, and must not have been published previously. Papers will be judged by a committee of scholars on the basis of originality and substance. The winning paper will published by the Society, or reprinted if the author prefers to publish elsewhere. Other submitted papers may also be selected for publication or reprint.

Submit entries in both paper and electronic form to **Professor Erkki Huhtamo, UCLA Department of Design | Media Arts, Broad Art Center, Rm. 2275, Box 951456 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1456 (erhuhta@ucla.edu)** by March 15, 2007.

Biblical Lantern Slides Wanted

Daniel Poulsen is searching for lantern slides with a Biblical theme, specifically the following sets: (1) A 52-slide and a 28-slide McAllister set on *Life of Christ*; (2) 42 colored slides on *The Holy City* from the St. Louis Calcium Light Company; (3) the following sets by unknown manufacturers: *Holy Land* (61 slides), *Passion Play* (50 slides and 20 slides), *Life and Customs of Palestine* (36 slides), *Illustrated Bible* (33 slides), *Life of Christ* (28 b&w, 52 colored slides), *In His Steps* (38 b&w, 10 colored), *The Vatican* (43 b&w, 10 colored). If you have any of these slides for sale, please contact him at **P.O. Box 172, Chico, CA; e-mail: lifechrist@hotmail.com; phone: 530-354-8517.**

DVDs of the Seattle Convention are Now Ready

DVDs of the 2006 Seattle Convention programs and workshops are available for sale. The cost is $15 for the programs alone, and $15 for the workshops. If both are purchased, the cost is $25. Shipping is free in U.S. International buyers pay postage. Please send checks to Mike Koch, 13540 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380.

2008 Washington Convention
Preliminary Announcement

The next convention of our society will be held Friday, July 11 through Sunday July 13, 2008 at the Crowne Plaza (Washington- National Airport) Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. The hotel is located on Jefferson Davis Highway in Crystal City, just 1.5 miles from the Ronald Reagan National Airport and minutes to Washington's major expressways, monuments, and attractions. It is only 1/2 block from the Crystal City Metro station.

Note that both the location and dates of the convention were changed from ones originally announced in Seattle. The changes will result in lower expense for both the society and members at a much more convenient location.

Hotel reservations may be made by calling the hotel directly at 703-416-1600 or at a central reservations system: 800-227-6963. To receive our negotiated reduced rates, identify the Magic Lantern Society at the time of the reservation.

Joanne and Harry Elsesser will chair the program committee and are already accepting proposals for presentations. Brief outlines can be sent to them by email to nx2117@aol.com or mail to 139 Sycamore Circle, Stony Brook, NY 11790. Phone is 631-751-2951.

Tom Rall is convention chairman. He can be contacted by email at marketflea@aol.com or mail at 1101 N. Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205. Phone is 703-534-89220.

Suggestions for Contributors to *The Magic Lantern Gazette*

The Magic Lantern Gazette publishes original research articles, book reviews, and short notes on the historical, artistic, and cultural impact of the magic lantern and related visual media, as well as news articles, visual images, and other items of interest to magic lantern collectors and scholars. Contributions can be sent to the Editor, Kentwood D. Wells, 451 Middle Turnpike, Storrs, CT 06268. The preferred method for submitting manuscripts is in the form of Word files, which can be emailed to kentwood.wells@uconn.edu, but typed or hand written items will be accepted as well. Questions or ideas for material to be submitted can be addressed to the Editor by email or by phone at 860-486-4454 (office) or 860-429-7458 (home).

Guidelines for Research Manuscripts

Research articles dealing with the history and culture of the magic lantern are especially welcome. Articles should be fully documented with references to sources used. The precise format for references is not critical—these can be in the form of numbered footnotes, or a list of references at the end. All articles also should include the author's name, address, e-mail, and any other relevant information to enable readers to contact the authors.

Illustrations

In a publication devoted to the history and culture of a visual medium, good illustrations are particularly important. Authors are encouraged to provide photographs or digital images of lanterns, slides, or printed materials. In some cases, it may be possible to publish color images tied to particular articles on the front and back covers. High-quality JPEG images, either in color or black and white, are preferred, but color slides or black and white prints also can be used. Photocopies generally are not of publishable quality. Digitally scanned images of magazine ads, handbills, broadsides, or other line illustrations are ideal. Images should be scanned in 24-bit color or 8-bit grayscale mode, with a descreening filter turned on to eliminate lines from halftone screens in photographs.

Lantern slides should be scanned as transparencies, not as documents, on a flatbed scanner. An alternative is to photograph slides using a high-quality digital or film camera and a lightbox illuminated with bulbs having a natural full sunlight spectrum (the light spectrum is not important if the image is to be reproduced in black and white). The Editor also can photograph lantern slides and return them safely packed to the authors.

Season's Greetings From

All images from the Wells Collection

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